

March 8, 2002

The Honorable Michael Powell  
Chairman, Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> St. SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

I am writing to add my support to the merger of EchoStar and DirecTV. The combination of these two satellite providers will provide a number of benefits to consumers including more services, especially more choices in channels and programming. By actively competing with the existing cable companies the combined EchoStar-DirecTV venture will provide competition where it counts most – in price.

As I understand it, the merger will allow previously unavailable programming because parts of the broadcast spectrum will be freed up through the elimination of duplicate programs. Additional local-to-local programming will be part of the new programming possibilities, and will benefit communities that were unable to (before the merger) receive their local television stations via satellite. In addition, the new merged company of EchoStar will be able to provide more educational programming with the new free broadcasting space.

Furthermore, the merger will benefit consumers in the way of high-speed internet service. With the new customer base EchoStar will have a large enough base of consumers to move this the high-speed internet service from the current high-priced niche market to one that is truly competitive with other providers. This will be especially advantageous to rural areas, such as the counties I represent, where cable modems and DSL are not likely to be available on a widespread basis in the near future.

Since my district is comprised of mostly rural areas they would benefit immensely from the EchoStar and DirecTV merger. My constituency would be able to receive access to these products within a few short months as a result of the merger, as opposed to several years if ever. It is for all of the aforementioned reasons that I urge you to respond positively when this matter is reviewed by your agency in the coming weeks.

Thank you for your time. I look forward to a positive outcome for my district. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact my Columbus office at 614-466-8049.

Sincerely,

Larry A. Mumper  
State Senator

LAM/kjk